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ABSTRACT

Surveys of the 23,199 students who entered the Maryland community college system in Fall 1974 and of the 6,975 students who graduated from the system in 1978 were conducted in 1978 and 1979, respectively, to assess the degree to which the colleges helped the students achieve their educational and career goals. The colleges supplied information on the students' major, credit hours, degree, grade point average, enrollment status, sex, age, and race. The surveys sought to determine: (1) the educational goals of the respondents and the proportion that achieved their goals: (2) reasons for college choice: (3) graduation rates of all entrants and those seeking an associate degree: (4) current enrollees: (5) reasons for discontinuance of attendance: (6) full-and part-time employment rates: (7) employment information, such as job location, salary, and satisfaction: (8) relation of job to training: (9) the impact of community college training on theoretical knowledge, job skills, promotions or raises, and finding a job: (10) the proportion of students desiring to transfer that did so: (11) the numbers of full- and part-time transfers: (12) relation of two- and four-year college majors: (13) satisfaction with preparation for transfer: and (14) overall evaluation of community college experience. The study report compares findings for both groups and includes data tables and the questionnaires. (JP)

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STUDENT FOLLOW-UP OF ENTRANTS AND GRADUATES

MARYLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

November, 1980

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STUDENT FOLLOW-UP OF ENTRANTS AND GRADUATES
MARYLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

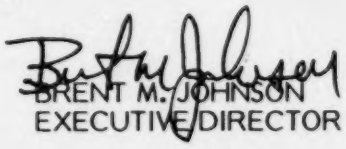
Abstract

The purpose of the study was to help Maryland community colleges evaluate the extent to which they assisted students in achieving their educational goals, their career development, and their preparation for transfer. The study includes a comparison of two distinct groups: students entering a Maryland community college for the first time in Fall, 1974, and students who were graduated from a Maryland community college in the Spring, 1978. Questionnaires were mailed in 1978 to 23,199 students who entered Maryland community colleges in 1974; the adjusted response rate was 43 percent. Questionnaires were mailed in 1979 to 6,975 students who graduated in 1978; the adjusted response rate was 63 percent. The findings included: (a) the primary reasons for attendance of graduates differ from the primary reasons of entrants, with a larger proportion of graduates preparing for immediate entry into a career and larger proportions of entrants updating skills or attending for self-enrichment; (b) the rate of self-reported goal achievement for graduates was 85 percent, while the rate for entrants was 63 percent; (c) employment among respondents whose goal was career development was about the same for entrants and graduates (approximately 75 percent); (d) transfer among respondents whose goal was transfer was about the same for entrants and graduates (approximately 72 percent); (e) degree of satisfaction with career and transfer preparation was high among both entrants and graduates. Several implications were drawn, including the need to see community colleges in light of student goals and achievement and not with a baccalaureate orientation. Encouraging black students to complete the associate degree has positive implications for their transfer goal achievement.

PREFACE

This report presents the results and implications of the fourth and fifth statewide student follow-up studies, joint projects of the State Board for Community Colleges and the Maryland Community College Research Group. Students who entered for the first time in Fall, 1974 were surveyed in Spring, 1978 and graduates from fiscal year 1978 were surveyed in Spring, 1979. The study of entrants was a replication of earlier studies of entrants in 1970, 1971, and 1972 (Hurley, 1974; Hurley, 1975; Tschechtelin, 1976). The current report includes extensive comparisons with the 1972 entrant study.

Although primary credit for this study goes to Jim Tschechtelin, the study could not have been completed without the cooperation and assistance of the follow-up study coordinators at each community college. Their help with the research design and data collection is gratefully acknowledged. Participation by the State Board for Community Colleges is supported in part by a grant from the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Vocational-Technical Education. Juanita Spencer and Maxine Pope of the State Board staff prepared the manuscript.



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STUDENT FOLLOW-UP OF ENTRANTS AND GRADUATES

MARYLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

PURPOSES

The primary purpose of the study was to help Maryland community colleges and the State Board for Community Colleges evaluate the extent to which they:

1. Assisted students in achieving their goals;
2. Assisted students in their career development;
3. Assisted students in their preparation for transfer to a senior college or university.

The study was also conducted to provide data for the Program Data Monitoring System and the Vocational Education Data System. Finally, the study was done to compare community college outcomes among entrants and graduates.

PROBLEM

The central problem addressed in this study was that Maryland community colleges and the State Board for Community Colleges needed updated information about the basic outcomes of community college education. While statewide student follow-up studies had been done in Maryland, it was important to have current information about why students came to the community colleges and what they did with their community college education.

In Maryland, program evaluation begins with the Program Data Monitoring (PDM) System, a computerized display of enrollment, degree, follow-up, discipline cost, and manpower information. The computer prints one page of information for each program at each college. The student follow-up studies are important elements of the PDM System since the employment rate, employment in field of training, transfer rate, and student satisfaction are shown in the display. Information is shown for both entrants and graduates for each program. Using the PDM System, the State Board for Community Colleges selects certain programs for qualitative investigation by the colleges.

The Vocational Education Data System is a comprehensive data collection system authorized by the Education Amendments of 1976. Basic information about employment rate and employment in trained field is required. A statewide approach is needed to provide valid and reliable data.

It has been maintained in the literature that community college entrants must be studied because so few students graduate, and that studying graduates alone would only examine the more traditional and the academically successful students. While there is much evidence to suggest such a postulation, the exact differences in the two populations had never been studied on a statewide basis in Maryland.

Beyond the practical uses of the follow-up data, there is a constant need for a better view of reality. Psychological research has established that humans tend to see what they want to see. One of the goals of research is to gain an increasingly clearer picture of reality, as distinguished from perceptions. In a time when community colleges are admitting nontraditional students with new goals, it is especially important to be in touch with the actual effects of college and not the effects that faculty and administrators prefer to see.

DEFINITIONS, ASSUMPTIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Definitions

Entrant: a student who was attending the community college for the first time and who had no previous college experience.

Program: a series of courses leading to a certificate or associate degree and the basis for reporting data at the State level.

Certificate: an award granted for the successful completion of 12 to 45 credits of instruction in an occupational program.

Associate in Arts: a degree awarded for the successful completion of a prescribed curriculum of at least 60 credits; the same award is given for both transfer and occupational programs.

Academic goal: the aim of the student in terms of credentialing; in this study, academic goals can be courses of interest, certificate, or associate in arts degree.

Personal goal: the aim of the student in terms of functional reasons for attendance, such as to prepare for employment or transfer.

Career development: the preparation for new employment or continued growth in one's current occupation.

Assumptions

It was assumed that (a) the goals of each Maryland community college include helping students to achieve educational, career, and transfer goals; (b) each Maryland community college wants to know about the outcomes of the educational process and will use such knowledge to improve the college; and (c) assessing the outcomes of education is a complex task and the current study must be combined with other evidence to draw an accurate picture.

Limitations

The outcomes explored were basic ones and generally limited to goal achievement, employment, and transfer. While these outcomes are important, they represent only a fraction of the possible effects of college. Changes in aspirations, competence, and personality were not investigated (Lenning and others, 1977).

The study did not assess the factors which helped and hindered student success, a crucial element if the results are to be used by colleges to improve education. In the study of entrants, goal questions were asked three and one-half years after admission to the college. Some students may not have remembered their original goals, and some may have unconsciously altered them.

Finally, the study made no attempt to compare college outcomes with the outcomes of other institutions, such as proprietary schools and military training programs.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.0 Educational Goals

1.1 What were the educational goals of the respondents?

1.2 What were the graduates' primary reasons for selecting the community college?

1.3 What proportion of the respondents achieved their goals?

1.4 What was the graduation rate among those entrants whose goal was an AA degree?

1.5 What proportion of all entrants had graduated?

1.6 What proportion of the entrants was still enrolled?

1.7 Why did the entrants discontinue attendance at the college?

2.0 Career Development

2.1 What proportion of the respondents whose goal had been career development was employed full-time?

2.2 What proportion of all respondents was employed full-time? Part-time?

2.3 What proportion of the respondents who were employed full-time held jobs in their field of training?

2.4 Where were the full-time respondents employed?

2.5 What were the salaries of graduates who were employed full-time?

2.6 What were the salaries of graduates who were employed part-time?

2.7 How did graduates locate their current jobs?

2.8 How satisfied were the respondents with their community college preparation for employment?

2.9 Did the community college program increase the entrants' theoretical understanding? Increase job skills? Help to get a job? Help to get a promotion or salary increase?

2.10 What was the primary reason for graduates having jobs not related to their community college program?

2.11 What was the primary reason why graduates were unable to secure employment?

3.0 Transfer

3.1 What proportion of the respondents whose goal was to transfer achieved their goal?

3.2 What proportion of all respondents transferred full-time? Part-time?

3.3 To what colleges did the respondents transfer?

3.4 For what proportion of the respondents was their community college program related to their major at the transfer school?

3.5 How many credits did respondents lose in the transfer process?

3.6 What was the grade point average of respondents at their transfer institution?

3.7 How satisfied were the respondents with their preparation for transfer?

4.0 Overall Evaluation

4.1 How satisfied were graduates with the quality of classroom instruction in their community college program?

4.2 How satisfied were graduates with the overall quality of their community college?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Williams and Snyder (1974) conducted a study to determine the status of community college occupational student follow-up. They found that while nearly all community colleges said they did some type of follow-up study, less than one-half conducted formal studies resulting in written reports. Although the range of quality among the reports was broad, most studies excluded nongraduates and failed to test for nonresponse bias; half of the reports consisted primarily of uninterpreted data.

Nickens (1976) studied a sample of 1,000 persons from 15 Florida community colleges. The purpose of the study was to investigate student attrition rates in the context of student educational objectives. Nickens concluded that two groups of students had been inappropriately labeled as dropouts. In the first group were students whose original goal was the completion of several courses with no intention of earning a degree. "When these students have finished the courses according to plan and no longer attend college, it does not seem appropriate to label them as dropouts." In the second group were students who had left the college but planned to return, possibly after working for a while to earn tuition and expense money. It was suggested that the word "dropout" be defined to mean those students who have not reached their educational goals and have no plans to complete these goals.

A study was conducted on former occupational-technical students in 13 Virginia community colleges (Gustillo and Trufant, 1974). In 1974, questionnaires were sent to 11,623 persons who were enrolled in occupational programs from Fall, 1966 through Fall, 1969. Sixty-one percent of the former students returned useful questionnaires. Four contacts were made with the population and telephone sampling was done to test for nonresponse bias; only a few areas of significant difference were found between nonrespondents and respondents.

Eyler, Kelly, and Snyder (1974) reported on the post-college activities of the Virginia occupational students. Data were presented about employment rate, relationship of college program to employment, salary, job location, and reasons for leaving the college. Trufant, Kelly, and Pullen (1974) reported the perceptions of the Virginia occupational students, including ratings of their community college experience, program change, goal achievement, and employment ratings. Comparable information from the Virginia and Maryland studies is given in the Results section of this report.

Elterich (1976) conducted a follow-up study of graduates of Connecticut regional community colleges. A survey instrument was administered to 2,911 June, 1975 graduates in transfer, occupational, and general curricula. Forty-eight percent of the graduates responded. Areas studied were the biographical characteristics of the graduates, their educational and career objectives and experience, and their attitudes toward their community college experience. Comparable information from the Connecticut and Maryland studies is given in the Results section of this report.

Knoell (1976) reported on a longitudinal study of 32,245 students enrolled for credit and new to California community colleges during the Fall of 1972. The study investigated patterns of enrollment and characteristics of entrants, and a section on the extent to which the community college system is fulfilling its purposes and achieving its objectives is included.

The Illinois Community College Board (1976) conducted a statewide follow-up study of 10,504 students who transferred in the Fall of 1973 from the community colleges to Illinois senior institutions. The study identified patterns of mobility in both sending and receiving institutions and student characteristics and achievement prior to and after transfer.

Vinarskai reported on the 1974-1975 Oregon community college statewide follow-up of graduates and early leavers. One-half of the graduates surveyed were employed full-time, while 34 percent were continuing their education. Twice as many graduates as early leavers were working in jobs related to their community college program. Data were presented on characteristics, employment, transfer, and satisfaction.

The Tex-SIS Follow-up System issued a report in 1977 on first-year graduates from 37 colleges. Both occupational-technical and transfer graduates were included. Information concerning characteristics, goals, employment, transfer, and satisfaction are discussed. Comparable information from the Texas and Maryland studies is given in the Results section of this report.

METHOD

Study Population

Entrants. The study population was defined as all persons who were first-time degree credit students in Maryland community colleges during Fall, 1974. The population of 23,199 students included students in occupational, transfer, and undeclared programs. Part-time and full-time students, graduates and nongraduates were included. All 16 Maryland community colleges that were in existence in 1974 participated (Appendix A).

Graduates. The population was defined as all students who graduated from a community college during fiscal year 1978. Persons who graduated with a certificate or associate in arts degree were included, as were students from either an occupational or transfer program. All 17 Maryland community colleges participated in the graduate follow-up. A few students are represented in both the entrant and the graduate populations if they graduated in four years.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were developed by the Maryland Community College Research Group and included information in four basic areas: goals and goal achievement, employment, transfer, and student satisfaction. The entrant and graduate questionnaires are shown in Appendix B.

The following information was supplied directly by each college from its records: program at exit from the community college, credit hours earned, highest degree earned, overall grade point average, current enrollment status, sex, year of birth, and race.

Procedure

The State Board for Community Colleges contracted for commercial printing of the questionnaires that were distributed to the colleges for mailing. Each college used student records to develop a master list of its study population. The master list was used to keep track of the respondents, nonrespondents, and packets

returned as undeliverable by the United States Postal Service. The first entrant packets were mailed in April, 1978 and consisted of a cover letter from the college, the questionnaire, and a preaddressed, prepaid return envelope. At two-week intervals, a second and third mailing was made to nonrespondents. Entrants were thus surveyed about three and one-half years after entry.

Graduate questionnaires were mailed in January 1979, about eight months after most students graduated. As completed questionnaires were received by the colleges, demographic data were added. In most colleges, demographic data were retrieved from magnetic files, printed on a label with the student's name, and attached to the questionnaire.

Return Rate

Entrants. Among the 23,199 persons in the population, 7,904 returned usable questionnaires for an unadjusted return rate of 34 percent. However, 5,001 questionnaires were returned as undeliverable by the Postal Service, producing a response rate of 43 percent among those actually receiving the questionnaires (Table 1). The response rate in the graduate study was down somewhat from the 1972 entrant study because a few colleges were unable to mail a second or third questionnaire to nonrespondents.

Graduates. Among the 6,975 graduates in the population, 4,223 returned usable questionnaires for a response rate of 61 percent. However, 280 questionnaires were returned as undeliverable by the Postal Service, producing a response rate of 63 percent among those actually receiving the questionnaires. The Texas statewide follow-up study achieved a response rate of 59 percent (Hall and Reed, 1977).

Table 1

INFORMATION ABOUT THE POPULATION AND THE SAMPLE

Information	1972 Entrants	1974 Entrants	1978 Graduates
Number of colleges participating	16	16	17
Population	19,634	23,199	6,975
Undeliverable questionnaires	3,549	5,001	280
Usable responses	7,648	7,904	4,223
Unadjusted response rate	39%	34%	61%
Response rate among those receiving questionnaires	48%	43%	63%

Response Bias

Entrants. Given the response rate obtained in the study, it was important to investigate the possibility of response bias. In the earlier study of 1972 entrants, telephone interviews were conducted in a sequential sampling technique to determine whether the results given by the respondents were different from those that might have been given by nonrespondents (Tschechtelin, 1976). The nonrespondents were found to be significantly less interested in transfer goals, less likely to have transferred, more likely to be employed, and more likely to recommend their program of study. Since there were no dramatic differences in the response rate and the results between the earlier and current entrant studies, the previous conclusion about nonresponse bias was maintained: respondents seem to differ from nonrespondents on the critical variables, and it is not possible to generalize to the entire population of students who entered in Fall, 1974. However, the entrant results may be interpreted cautiously, keeping in mind that academicaly successful students were overrepresented in the sample.

Graduates. Respondents were compared with the population on three variables: sex, race, and program. The sex of the respondents was virtually identical with that of the population, 43 percent men in the sample and 42 percent men in the population. Black students were slightly less likely to have responded, but the difference was not strong (12 percent in the sample and 15 percent in the population). There were only minor differences regarding programs between the sample and the population. The respondents were somewhat less likely to have a transfer program (40 percent vs. 44 percent), but other differences were smaller. For example, in the sample, 20 percent were from health programs compared with 22 percent in the population. Based upon the response rate and the comparisons between the sample and the population on three variables, the results of the graduate study are considered respresentative of all 1978 graduates.

Analysis

Each college coordinator forwarded the completed questionnaires, including demographic information, to the State Board for Community Colleges. The data were keypunched, verified, and analyzed at the University of Maryland Computer Science Center. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Stienbrenner, and Bent, 1976) was used for the statistical analysis. The level of significance was set at .05 for all statistical tests. The following materials were provided to each community college: the results for their college, statewide aggregate results, and the original questionnaires. Student identifiers were not keypunched, and there are no personally identifiable student records maintained at the State Board for Community Colleges.

Costs

Table 2 presents a partial listing of the costs of conducting the statewide follow-up studies. The table only includes costs incurred by the State Board for Community Colleges and does not include the salaries for the Director of Planning and Research and the support staff. The Director of Planning and Research spends

about one-fourth of his time on student follow-up studies. The following college costs are not included: computer time, address labels, cover letter, any unreimbursed mailing expenses, staff time, and printing of local reports. If the state costs for computing and printing in Table 2 are divided between the two studies, the state agency costs for the entrant study were $1.14 per response and $1.35 per response for the graduate study. The total costs, including an estimate of state agency staff time and local costs, would be $2.50 to $3.00 per response.

Table 2

PARTIAL STATE AGENCY COSTS FOR FOLLOW-UP STUDIES

	1974 Entrants	1978 Graduates
Keypunching and verifying	$1,040 for 7,904 responses	$818 for 4,089 responses
Printing questionnaires	$806 for 55,000 forms	$816 for 16,000 forms
Partial reimbursement for mailing	$4,640 for 23,199 items	$1,395 for 6,975 items
Printing combined report	$1,006 for 500 copies	
Computing for both studies	$4,000 (estimate)	

RESULTS

Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 3 shows the characteristics of the respondents while enrolled in Maryland community colleges. The typical graduate who earned an associate degree in a career program was white, female, and 28 years old. The typical 1974 entrant was also a white female but was slightly younger and in a transfer program. There were few differences between the 1972 and the 1974 entrants, except that the latter group was more likely to attend part-time and complete fewer credits. Unlike the entrants, more than half of the graduates had been in a career program. The higher proportion of graduates in career programs may reflect the fact that many students in transfer programs go on to another college without completing the requirements for graduation. Another possibility is that a high proportion of the students with an undeclared program eventually select a career program.

The existence of 42 graduates from an "undeclared program" indicates a minor problem with updating the students' curriculum codes in the student data files. Except for attendance status, all data in Table 3 were provided by the colleges and not reported by the respondent.

Table 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF ENTRANTS AND GRADUATES

Characteristic	1972 Entrants Number	1972 Entrants Percent	1974 Entrants Number	1974 Entrants Percent	1978 Graduates Number	1978 Graduates Percent
Program Type at Exit						
Transfer	3,675	48	3,530	46	1,705	40
Career	2,612	34	2,875	37	2,455	58
Undeclared	1,344	18	1,295	17	42	1
Highest Degree Earned						
AA	1,631	21	1,670	22	3,828	91
Certificate	55	1	83	1	330	8
None	5,940	78	5,962	77	27	1
Sex						
Male	3,530	47	3,228	41	1,818	43
Female	4,002	53	4,627	59	2,399	57
Race						
Minority	927	12	1,146	15	686	16
White	6,587	88	6,395	85	3,529	84
Attendance Status						
Part-time	3,275	44	4,216	55	Not Available	
Full-time	4,116	56	3,392	45		
Mean Credits Earned	33.2		31.3		62.3	
Cumulative Grade Point Average	2.5		2.7		3.0	
Mean Age	24.0 (in 1972)		26.2 (in 1974)		28.2 (in 1978)	
ALL RESPONDENTS	7,648	100	7,904	100	4,223	100

NOTE: For some variables, the number adds to less than the number for all respondents because of blanks. On this and all subsequent tables, percentages do not always add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Status of Entrants and Graduates

Figure 1 summarizes the status of the entrants three and one-half years after admission to the community college. Over half were employed, and another fourth were employed while attending a transfer college. Among persons who were

employed only, most were employed full-time; according to the behavior of their students, the primary function of community colleges in Maryland is career development, including skill upgrading and preparation for employment. Many of the students who transferred were employed part-time. While only one-tenth of the students transferred and were not employed, nearly half had obtained associate degrees from the community college. Fourteen percent of the entrants either had full-time home responsibilities or were seeking work. About half of the persons in this latter category were seeking work.

Figure 2 summarizes the status of graduates about one year after graduation from the community college. The pattern of activities of the graduates is quite similar to that of the entrants, except that more of the graduates transferred without being employed (15 percent vs. 11 percent). Fewer of the graduates had full-time home responsibilites or were seeking work than among the entrants (8 percent vs. 14 percent). About half of the persons in the latter category were seeking work, and less than one percent were in the military.

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the section which follows, the research questions stated earlier are discussed in terms of the results from the studies of entrants and graduates. Questions appear in the order previously presented.

1.0 Educational Goals

1.1 What were the educational goals of the respondents?

One-third of the entrants and graduates said that their primary reason for attending a community college was to prepare for transfer to a four-year institution (Table 4). The goals of the graduates were more career-oriented than those of the entrants, with about 40 percent of the graduates being interested in either preparation for a new career or updating current skills. However, the entrants were more interested in updating skills than the graduates. Only about half as many graduates as entrants have personal interest goals.

In addition to educational goals, 1974 entrants were asked to indicate their academic goal. Fifty-eight percent responded that they had an AA degree as their academic goal; 7 percent a certificate; and 34 percent simply courses of interest. A greater proportion of entrants in career programs sought an AA degree than did entrants in transfer programs (71 percent vs. 59 percent).

Figure I

STATUS OF ENTRANTS THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS LATER

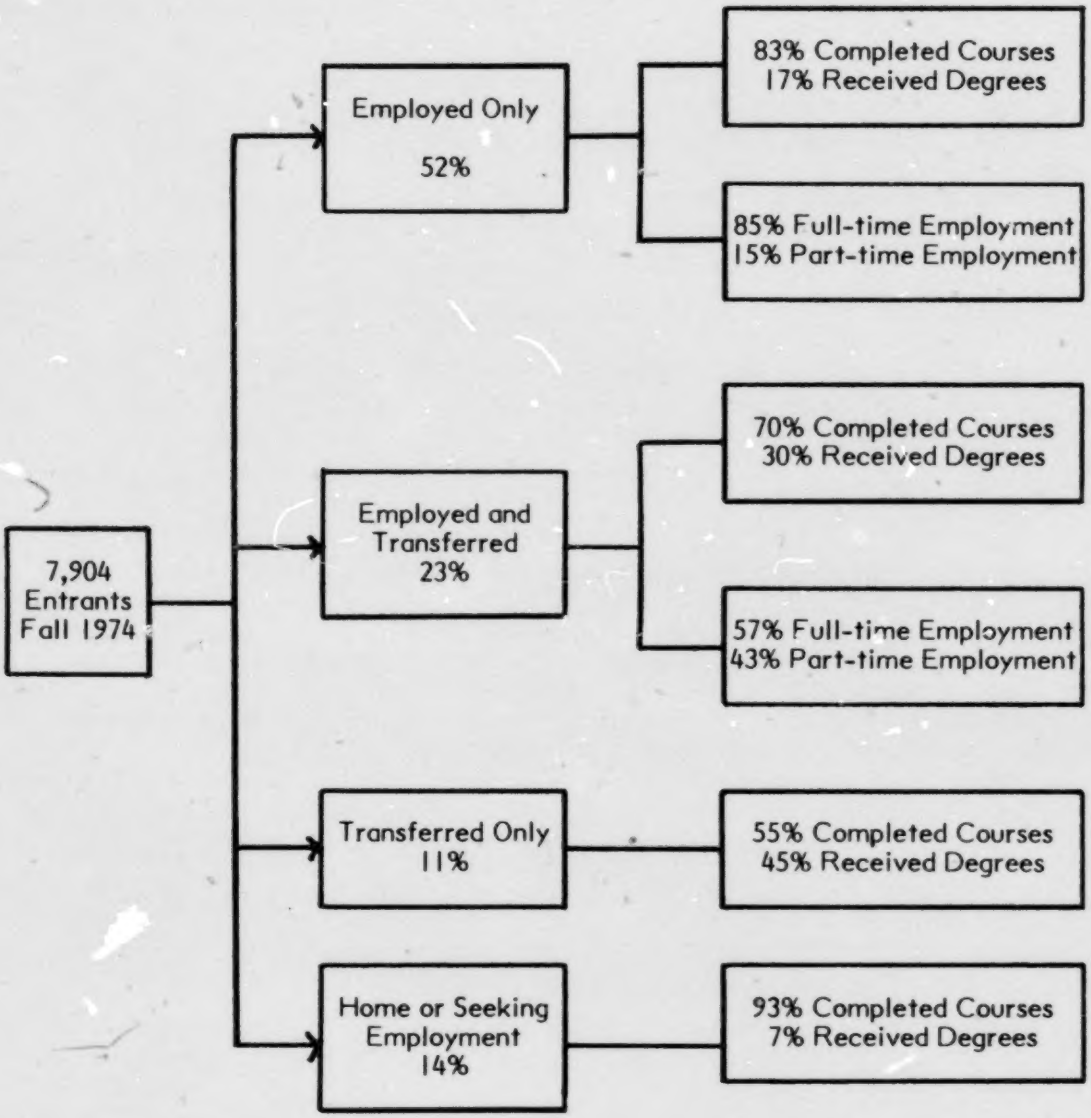


Figure 2

STATUS OF GRADUATES ONE YEAR LATER

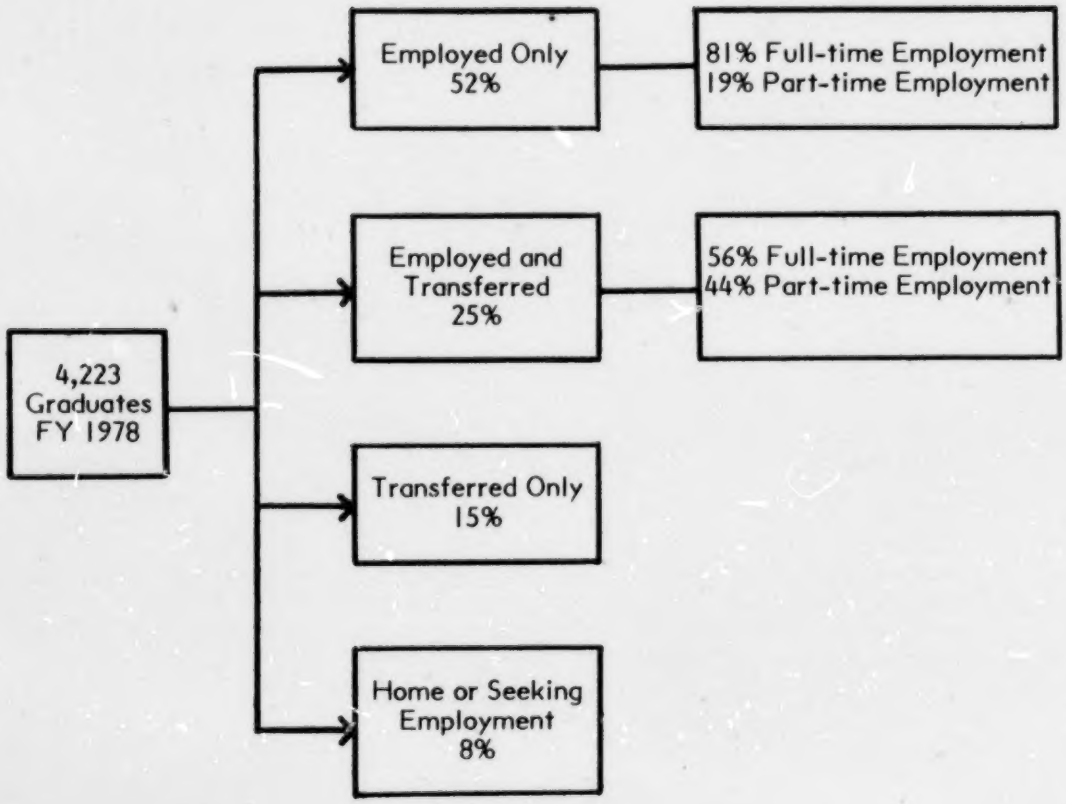


Table 4

EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Primary Goal	1974 Entrants Number	1974 Entrants Percent	1978 Graduates Number	1978 Graduates Percent
Explore new career or academic areas	1,045	14	544	15
Prepare for immediate entry into a career	1,362	18	1,144	32
Prepare for transfer to a four-year college	2,346	32	1,170	32
Update skills for a job currently held	971	13	264	7
Interest and self-enrichment	1,378	19	369	10
Other goal	243	3	107	3

1.2 What were the graduates' primary reasons for selecting the community college?

Reasons selected most often for attending the community college were its convenient location, program availability, and low cost (Table 5). Only 4 percent of the graduates said they came to the community college because they were unwilling or unable to attend another college, suggesting that the students may have been drawn to the assets of the community college and not forced to accept it. The question was not asked of 1972 or 1974 entrants.

Table 5

PRIMARY REASONS
FOR CHOICE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Primary Reason	1978 Graduates Number	1978 Graduates Percent
Convenient location	1,161	35
Program I wanted was offered	1,126	34
Low cost	540	16
College's academic reputation	196	6
Unwilling or unable to attend another college	119	4
Advice of friends	70	2
Financial aid available	67	2
Advice of high school counselor	23	1

1.3 What proportion of the respondents achieved their goals?

Eighty-five percent of the graduates stated that they had achieved their goals (Table 6). The rate of goal achievement for 1974 entrants was 63 percent, up somewhat from the 1972 entrants. As reported in research question 1.7, a number of the entrants leave because of scheduling conflicts and personal reasons. It might be expected, therefore, that the goal achievement rate would be higher for the graduates who have persisted to the degree. Nickens (1976) studied community college students in Florida and reported that 58 percent of the students accomplished the goal they had hoped to achieve when they enrolled; the Maryland study found similar results, with 59 percent goal achievement for 1972 entrants and 63 percent goal achievement for 1974 entrants.

The rate of goal achievement was related to the sex and race, with higher goal achievement for females and whites. The racial differences were more extreme than the sex differences. Among programs in the study of 1974 entrants, the highest self-reported goal achievement was in the Allied Health area, such as Dental Hygiene (96 percent), Nursing (75 percent), and Medical Laboratory Technology (72 percent). Programs with the lowest goal achievement included several from the business area, such as General Business (56 percent), Computer Programming (48 percent), and Accounting (47 percent).

Table 6

SELF-REPORTED GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

Group	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL	3,355	59	3,555	63	3,282	85
Sex						
Male	1,507	58	1,398*	60	1,370*	83
Female	1,790	60	2,138*	65	1,908*	86
Race						
Minority	289*	46	313*	50	366*	77
White	3,029*	61	2,961*	64	2,821*	86

* Differences within each study significant at the .01 level.

1.4 What was the graduation rate among those entrants whose goal was an Associate in Arts degree?

Forty-three percent of the 1974 entrants with an AA goal had received the degree within three and one-half years from the time of entry. The percentage was approximately the same for the 1972 entrants (Table 7). Students who had changed their goal or who were currently enrolled were not included in the analysis. Among programs in study of 1974 entrants, the highest degree achievement was in Dental Hygiene (96 percent), Medical Laboratory Technology (72 percent), and Nursing (62 percent). Community colleges often have academic requirements for admission to allied health programs, a fact that may help to account for the high rates of degree goal achievement. Programs with the lowest degree goal achievement were Accounting (25 percent), General Business (24 percent), and Early Childhood Development (17 percent). The health programs have specific skill requirements that must be completed in order to be employed. This is less true for Accounting and General Business. In Early Childhood, employment can take place after only 64 clock hours have been completed.

Achievement of an AA goal was analyzed by sex, race, and program type. Significant differences by program type were not found. Racial differences were found in both groups however. There is some evidence that black students are academically less prepared than whites when they enroll (Linthicum, 1979). The high school grade average of community college blacks is 2.03, compared with 2.55 for whites. First-time black students comprise 30 percent of the students in remedial English courses while only comprising 10 percent of the introductory college-level English courses. Requirements for the associate degree and for transfer programs include English, math, and science courses not present in many occupational programs. The combination of less academic preparation and a math-English oriented curriculum could help to explain the lower rates of degree and transfer achievement for blacks. This matter is addressed in greater detail in Tschechtelin (1979).

Linthicum also studied the effectiveness of remedial programs. First-time students who took remedial English courses were compared with students who enrolled directly in college-level English. Forty-one percent of the students who began in remedial English stayed at the college for four semesters versus 53 percent of the students who began in college-level English. Students who began in regular English also completed a higher percentage of their hours attempted (90 percent vs. 76 percent) and earned higher cumulative grade point averages (2.66 vs. 1.94 on a 4.0 system). The study concluded that students in remedial programs were reasonably successful in their community college work but also pointed to the need for competent diagnostic testing of all students (full- and part-time), more faculty development, and programs that go beyond cognitive skills to personal factors such as self-concept and attitudes about learning.

Table 7

DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT AMONG ENTRANTS
WHOSE GOAL WAS AN ASSOCIATE IN ARTS DEGREE

Group	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL	1,268	45	1,370	43
Sex				
Male	568*	41	555	41
Female	700*	49	815	45
Race				
Minority	106*	33	113*	26
White	1,155*	47	1,135*	45
Program Type				
Transfer	703	45	670	45
Career	529	48	671	46
Undeclared	38	2	29	1

* Differences within each study significant at the .01 level.

1.5 What proportion of all entrants had graduated?

Twenty-two percent of the 1974 entrants had received an AA degree within three and one-half years after entrance. The graduation rate for all entrants therefore was only half the rate among those with an AA goal. About one percent of 1974 entrants received a certificate.

In the study of 1974 entrants, a special analysis was done to determine the demographic characteristics of graduates and nongraduates. Students most likely to graduate were full-time, under age 20, white, in occupational programs, and with average grades (2.5 to 2.99 on a 4.0 scale). No differences by sex were found. Students with high grades (3.5 and above) were as likely not to graduate as students with lower grades (2.0 to 2.49). It could be that students with transfer goals who do extremely well in the community college transfer before obtaining the degree.

1.6 What proportion of the entrants was still enrolled?

Seventeen percent of the 1974 entrants were still enrolled at their community college three and one-half years after entering college, up slightly from the 1972 study. Of course, students who were reported as still enrolled had not necessarily been enrolled continuously since their entry into college. Some respondents may have left the college for one or more semsters and re-entered. A statewide occupational student follow-up study in Virginia indicated that 15 percent of the students were still enrolled in a community college two to five years after entrance (Eyler, Kelly, and Snyder, 1974); the comparable figure for Maryland was 17 percent for 1974 entrants.

1.7 Why did the entrants discontinue attendance at the college?

The four reasons given most often by the 1974 entrants as the primary reason for discontinuing attendance (among nongraduates) were that they had achieved their educational goals, had transferred, had a scheduling conflict between job and studies, or personal/marriage reasons (Table 8). In the Illinois study of occupational entrants (Lach, 1978), 19 percent said that they left the college because they took all courses originally planned, a similar item and response to the Maryland item "achieved educational goal."

In a national longitudinal study, Fetters (1977) questions the validity of self-reported reasons for withdrawal. He maintains that withdrawal behavior is complex and that there is a natural tendency to rationalize unsuccessful behavior. Fetters does conclude that self-reported reasons are still useful, particularly for students who do not have academic problems. Spady (1971) cites a number of studies showing that students tend to explain failure with more socially acceptable reasons. They tend to inflate their financial problems and to deny academic difficulties, lack of motivation, and indecision. However, national studies that include four-year colleges tend to define failure as the inability to complete a baccalaureate degree. Fetters found that over 25 percent of the former students listed financial difficulties as a reason for leaving, compared to only 4 percent in the Maryland study of entrants.

Table 8

PRIMARY REASON FOR NOT RETURNING TO COLLEGE
AMONG 1974 ENTRANTS

Reason	Number	Percent
Achieved educational goal	631	16
Transferred	600	15
Scheduling conflict between job and studies	558	14
Personal/marriage	504	13
Accepted a job	358	9
Program or courses not available at this college	303	8
Unsure about choice of major	183	5
Changed educational goal	171	4
Dissatisfaction with program	123	3
Dissatisfied with quality of teaching	89	2
Financial aid was not sufficient	89	2
Applied, but could not obtain financial aid	56	1
Low grades	54	1
Course work not challenging	46	1
Found courses too difficult	40	1
This college was too expensive	36	1
Went into military service	31	1
Child care too costly	29	1

NOTE: Only nongraduates are included.

2.0 Career Development

2.1 What proportion of the respondents whose goal had been career development were employed full-time?

Three-fourths of the respondents whose goal had been career development were employed full-time (Table 9). Career goal achievement was analyzed by sex and by race. While significantly more male respondents in the 1974 study achieved career goals, no racial differences were found. No differences by sex or by race were found among the 1978 graduates.

Among programs in the study of 1974 entrants, the highest employment goal achievement was reached in Data Processing (93 percent), Fire Science (93 percent), and Dental Hygiene (91 percent). Programs with the lowest employment goal achievement were Mental Health (72 percent), Accounting (70 percent), and Medical Laboratory Technology (59 percent).

Table 9

EMPLOYMENT AMONG RESPONDENTS
WHOSE GOAL WAS CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Group	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL	1,416	74	1,405	79	1,061	75
Sex						
Male	558*	81	590*	86	377	79
Female	829*	70	807*	74	682	73
Race						
Minority	197	71	229	78	102	71
White	1,204	74	1,047	78	947	76

* Differences within each study significant at the .01 level.

2.2 What proportion of all respondents were employed full-time? Part-time?

Seventy-seven percent of the 1978 graduates were employed; 56 percent employed full-time, and 21 percent part-time (Table 10). The proportion of respondents reporting full-time employment is comparable for both entrants and graduates, but the 1978 graduates were somewhat more likely to be employed part-time than the entrants. Among those 1978 graduates who were employed full-time, about half held the same job they held prior to or while attending college. The proportion of students getting their present job after leaving the college was quite similar in the entrant and graduate studies.

In the Virginia follow-up study of occupational students, 77 percent were employed (Eyler, Kelly, and Snyder, 1974); the comparable Maryland figure was 71 percent. In the Connecticut follow-up study of 1975 graduates, about three-fourths of the respondents were employed (Elterich, 1976); the comparable figure for Maryland was 77 percent.

Figure 3 (page 21) summarizes employment and employment goal achievement among entrants and graduates. Over half of the students were employed full-time, and over three-fourths achieved their career development goal. Results on these two items are nearly identical in the studies of entrants and graduates.

Table 10

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Variable	1972 Entrants Number	1972 Entrants Percent	1974 Entrants Number	1974 Entrants Percent	1978 Graduates Number	1978 Graduates Percent
Status						
Full-time	4,230	55	4,524	57	2,379	56
Part-time	1,235	16	1,438	18	877	21
Present job began						
Prior to or during college	2,508	46	2,928	48	1,055	48
After college	2,983	54	3,211	52	1,160	52

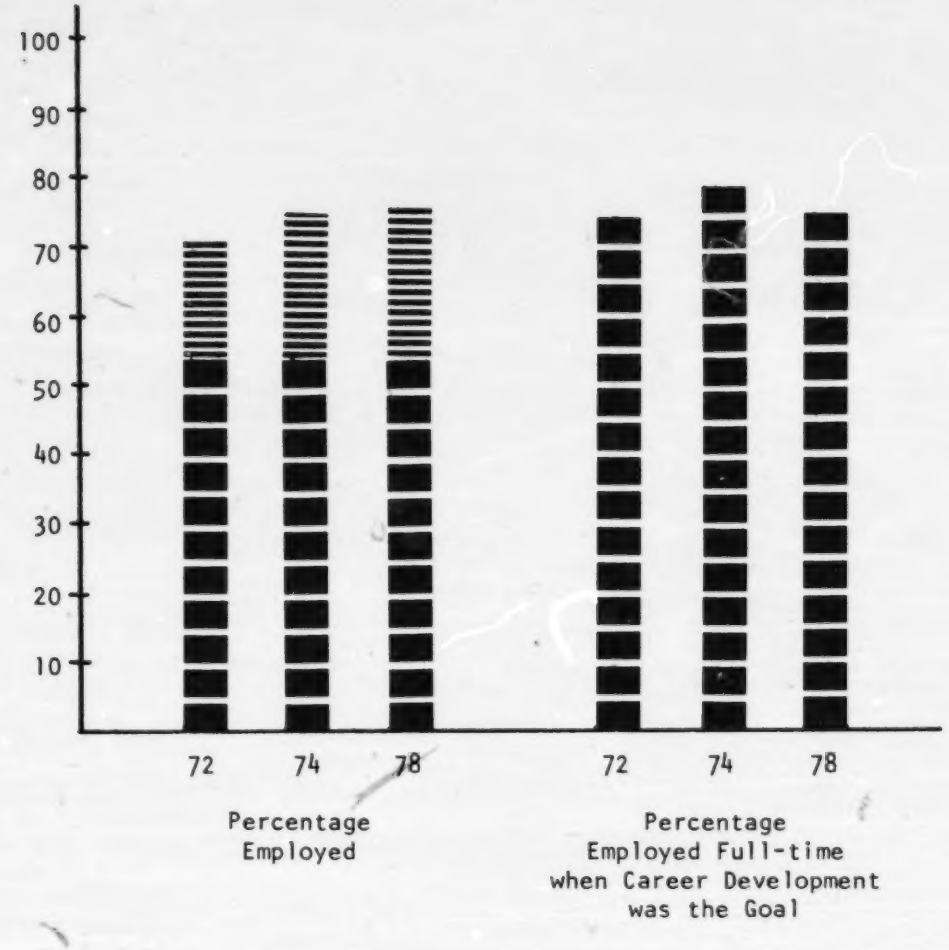
2.3 What proportion of the respondents who were employed full-time held jobs in their field of training?

Eighty percent of 1978 graduates were employed in full-time jobs that were either directly related to or somewhat related to their community college program (Table 11). In the study of graduates, the highest rates of direct relationship between job and training were Dental Hygiene (97 percent), Nursing (94 percent), and Dental Assisting (88 percent). Programs with the least relationship between job and training were Human Services (22 percent), Child Care (46 percent), and Retail Management (49 percent).

Among entrants, about three-fourths were employed full-time in jobs that were either directly or somewhat related to their community college program. In general, there seems to be more program-to-job relationship among graduates than among entrants.

Figure 3

EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT GOAL ACHIEVEMENT



Col. 72 shows percentage of students who entered in Fall 1972.
Col. 74 shows percentage of students who entered in Fall 1974.
Col. 78 shows percentage of students who graduated in FY 1978.

The Virginia follow-up study of entering occupational students reported that 72 percent held a present job that was directly or somewhat related to their community college program; the comparable figure for 1974 Maryland entrants was 75 percent. The Connecticut follow-up of graduates found that 65 percent held a job which was directly or somewhat related to their program. The comparable figure for Maryland graduates was 80 percent.

Table 11

RELATIONSHIP OF THE RESPONDENTS' PROGRAMS TO THEIR FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Relationship	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Directly related	799	47	953	48	1,261	54
Somewhat related	441	26	534	27	608	26
Not related	470	28	506	25	479	20

2.4 Where were the full-time respondents employed?

Nearly one-half of the graduates who were employed full-time were employed in the same county as their community college. Thirty-nine percent were employed in some other Maryland location, and the remainder were employed out-of-state (Table 12). Even though the entrant data in Table 12 includes only career program students, it seems clear that the proportion remaining in Maryland for employment is the same among entrants and graduates, about 85 percent. The Virginia follow-up study of occupational entering students showed that 92 percent were employed in their home state or the District of Columbia. The corresponding figures for all three Maryland studies were each 92 percent.

Table 12

EMPLOYMENT LOCATION OF RESPONDENTS

Location	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Same county as community college	833	49	986	50	976	46
Other Maryland county	288	17	283	14	415	19
Baltimore City	336	20	425	22	424	20
Washington, D.C.	117	7	126	6	167	8
Delaware	3	-	6	-	15	1
Pennsylvania	25	2	30	2	28	1
Virginia	31	2	32	2	44	2
West Virginia	11	1	12	1	14	1
Other state	55	3	62	3	59	3

2.5 What were the salaries of graduates who were employed full-time?

Table 13 presents the weekly salaries of graduates employed full-time. One-fourth of the graduates reported earning less than $176 per week. Half of the graduates earned between $176 and $295, and the remaining graduates earned more than $295 per week. Salary data were not collected in the study of 1974 entrants.

Table 13

WEEKLY SALARY OF GRADUATES EMPLOYED FULL-TIME

Weekly Salary	1978 Graduates Number	Percent
0 - $145	273	13
$146 - $175	281	14
$176 - $205	311	15
$206 - $235	254	12
$236 - $265	304	15
$266 - $295	165	8
$296 - $325	131	6
$326 and above	318	16

2.6 What were the salaries of graduates who were employed part-time?

Fifty-four percent of the graduates who were employed part-time reported an hourly salary of less than $4.00 per hour (Table 14). More than half the respondents earned between $2.00 and $4.00. The mean hourly salary was $4.19; the minimum wage in 1979 was $2.90 per hour.

Table 14

HOURLY SALARY
OF GRADUATES EMPLOYED PART-TIME

Hourly Salary	1978 Graduates Number	Percent
$0.01 - $1.99	13	2
$2.00 - $3.99	291	52
$4.00 - $5.99	171	31
$6.00 - $7.99	73	13
$8.00 - $9.99	6	1
$10.00 - $11.99	1	-

2.7 How did graduates locate their current jobs?

Almost two-thirds of the graduates located their current jobs either by personally contacting an employer or through a family member or friend (Table 15). Respondents were allowed to check as many sources of help as were applicable, and only graduates employed full-time were included in the table. One percent indicated that they located their job through a College Placement Office and 6 percent through a faculty member. Even though 29 percent of the respondents had obtained their jobs prior to attending college, the data suggest that faculty and, in particular, college placement services assist only a very small proportion of the graduates in locating a job.

The Illinois study of entrants in occupational programs (Lach, 1978) found that the majority of students found a job on their own. Less than 3 percent of the students got a job through their college placement office.

Table 15

ASSISTANCE IN LOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Source of Assistance	1978 Graduates Number	Percent
Contacted employer on own	977	41
Family or friend	452	19
Newspaper	291	12
Other	269	11
Faculty	150	6
Employment Agency	103	4
College Placement Office	33	1

NOTE: Respondents could check more than one source; only responses from full-time employees were included.

2.8 How satisfied were the respondents with their community college preparation for employment?

More than nine-tenths of the graduates who were employed full-time reported that they were satisfied with their preparation for employment with 65 percent satisfied and 27 percent extremely satisfied (Table 16). Programs with the highest rate of satisfaction among graduates were Radiology (60 percent extremely satisfied), Medical Laboratory Technician (52 percent), Early Childhood (48 percent), and Secretarial Science (45 percent). Programs with the least satisfaction among graduates were Computer Programming (22 percent extremely satisfied), Accounting (22 percent), and Business (20 percent). The question was not asked in the entrant studies.

Table 16

SATISFACTION WITH PREPARATION
FOR EMPLOYMENT

Satisfaction	1978 Graduates Number	Percent
Extremely satisfied	516	27
Satisfied	1,251	65
Unsatisfied	149	8

2.9 Did the community college program increase the entrants' theoretical understanding? Increase job skills? Help to get a job? Help to get a promotion or salary increase?

Entrants were asked four questions about employment assistance provided by their career program. Almost nine-tenths of 1974 entrants reported that their career program increased their theoretical understanding and increased their job skills (Table 17). Almost half of the entrants reported that their career program helped them obtain their job or get a salary increase or promotion.

In the Connecticut graduate follow-up, 45 percent reported that their program helped them obtain a job (vs. 49 percent in Maryland), and 38 percent reported that their program assisted in obtaining salary increases (the comparable Maryland figure was 45 percent). Seventy percent of Connecticut graduates reported that their program increased their theoretical understanding (89 percent in Maryland) and 67 percent reported that their program increased job skills (87 percent in Maryland).

Table 17

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY CAREER PROGRAMS

Type of Assistance	1972 Entrants Number	Percent	1974 Entrants Number	Percent
Increased theoretical understanding	1,015	88	1,229	89
Increased job skills	952	83	1,201	87
Helped to obtain job	545	49	618	49
Helped to obtain salary increases and/or promotions	428	41	511	45

2.10 What was the primary reason for graduates having jobs not related to their community college program?

Of the graduates who were employed full-time in a job that was unrelated to their program, one-fourth said they were unable to find a job in their field (Table 18). Seventeen percent were able to find a better paying job outside their field of study, and 22 percent indicated that the program of study at their college had not been career-oriented. Only 4 percent reported that they had decided that they did not want to work in their field of study. The question was not asked in the entrant studies.

Table 18

REASONS FOR WORKING IN JOBS NOT RELATED TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAM

Reason	1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent
Could not find job in trained field	90	25
Other	86	24
Program at college not career oriented	80	22
Better pay in another field	62	17
Better advancement in another field	26	5
Didn't want prepared field	21	4

2.11 What was the primary reason why graduates were unable to secure employment?

Of the 392 graduates who were not employed, about half were seeking a job. Among graduates seeking a job, the reason most often given for unemployment was that there were too few openings in their field of training (Table 19). The occupational programs with the most graduates stating that there were too few openings were Mental Health Technology and Human Services. One-fourth of the respondents seeking employment reported that they needed more education to qualify for the job they wanted. Table 19 only displays results among graduates who responded to the item; 31 percent of the unemployed graduates who were seeking work did not answer the question.

Table 19

PRIMARY REASON
FOR BEING UNABLE TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT

Reason	1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent
Few openings in the field in which graduate prepared	53	42
Need more education to qualify for job wanted	34	27
Have not looked hard enough	22	18
Changed career objectives since graduating	12	10
Salary too low in the field in which graduate prepared	4	3

3.0 Transfer

3.1 What proportion of the respondents whose goal was to transfer achieved their goal?

Among graduates with this goal, 74 percent transferred. Among entrants whose goal was to transfer, 76 percent transferred, up 8 percent from the 1972 entrants (Table 20). Transfer goal achievement was analyzed by sex and by race. There were no significant differences in the rate of transfer goal achievement by sex. While minorities achieved transfer goals at a significantly lower rate among entrants, there was no significant racial difference in transfer goal achievement among graduates.

Table 20

TRANSFER AMONG RESPONDENTS WHOSE GOAL WAS TRANSFER

Group	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL	2,055	68	1,375	76	861	74
Sex						
Male	1,136	69	693	76	466	73
Female	909	67	680	76	395	75
Race						
Minority	169*	58	93*	59	94	67
White	1,860*	69	1,200*	78	729	74

* Differences within each study are significant at the 0.01 level.

3.2 What proportion of all respondents transferred full-time? Part-time?

Among all graduates (regardless of their goal), 40 percent transferred (Table 21). In this study, transfer refers to any work at another college or university after leaving the community college. Forty percent of the graduates that transferred were from occupational programs in the community college. The transfer rate was 35 percent among 1974 entrants, down slightly from the 1972 entrants and below the rate for graduates. The majority of respondents who transferred, did so on a full-time basis.

Table 21

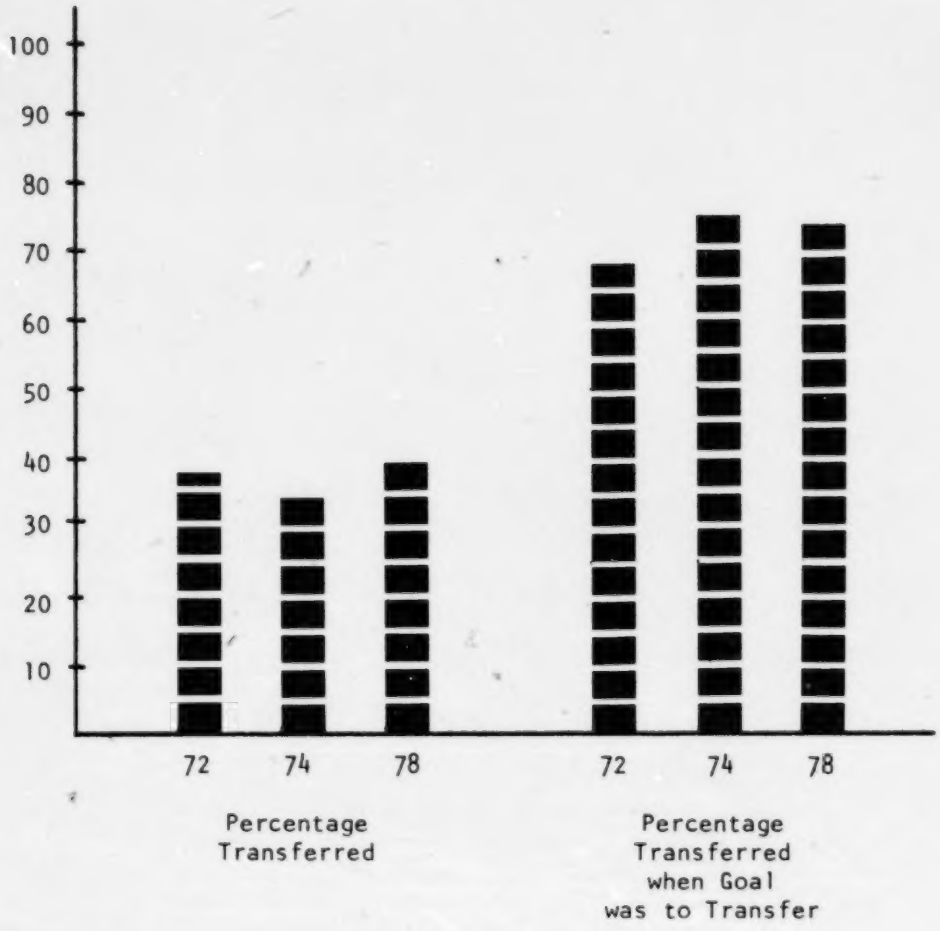
RESPONDENTS WHO TRANSFERRED

Group	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL	2,872	38	2,723	35	1,681	40
Status of Transfer Student						
Full-time	2,287	81	2,025	75	1,041	63
Part-time	542	19	663	25	620	37

Figure 4 shows the rate of transfer and transfer goal achievement among entrants and graduates. The rate of transfer goal achievement is nearly double the transfer rate among all respondents.

Figure 4

TRANSFER AND TRANSFER GOAL ACHIEVEMENT



Col. 72 shows percentage of students who entered in Fall 1972.
Col. 74 shows percentage of students who entered in Fall 1974.
Col. 78 shows percentage of students who graduated in FY 1978.

3.3 To what colleges did the respondents transfer?

More than four-fifths of the graduates who transferred went to a Maryland institution, including 34 percent to the University of Maryland and 34 percent to a Maryland State college (Table 22). Graduates were more likely to attend a Maryland college and one of the public state colleges than were entrants.

Table 22

TRANSFER INSTITUTIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Institution	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Maryland						
University of Maryland	879	31	816	30	577	34
Public State College	758	26	688	25	564	34
Private four-year	214	8	187	7	136	8
Community College	189	7	242	9	97	6
Technical/ commercial	49	2	61	2	18	1
Private two-year	11	-	14	-	23	1
TOTAL MARYLAND	2,100	74	2,008	73	1,415	84
Non-Maryland						
Public four-year	386	13	334	12	124	7
Private four-year	284	10	262	10	103	6
Others	102	4	119	4	39	2
TOTAL NON-MD	772	27	715	26	266	15

3.4 For what proportion of the respondents was their community college program related to their major at the transfer school?

Over nine-tenths of the graduates reported that their community college program was either directly or somewhat related to their major at the transfer institution (Table 23). In Maryland, transfer programs are grouped into seven transfer program areas: Arts and Sciences, Biological and Physical Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, Engineering, General Studies, Teacher Education, and Business Administration. Differences were found in the relationship of community college program and transfer major by transfer program area. General Studies had the least relationship between community college program and transfer major, and Business Administration showed the greatest relationship. More graduates than entrants reported that their community college program was directly related to their major at the transfer school. The Connecticut follow-up of graduates found that 86 percent reported that their community college field of study was directly or somewhat related to their transfer curriculum. The comparable Maryland figure is 91 percent.

Table 23

RELATIONSHIP OF RESPONDENTS' COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAMS TO THEIR TRANSFER MAJOR

Relationship	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Directly related	1,372	48	1,328	49	914	57
Somewhat related	994	35	925	34	549	34
Not related	463	16	440	16	151	9

3.5 How many credits did the respondents lose in the transfer process?

More than half of the graduates reported that they lost three credits or less in the transfer process (Table 24). While the number of credits lost remained stable for the entrants, the entrants lost substantially fewer credits than the graduates lost. The difference may be due to the fact that 40 percent of the graduates that transferred were from occupational programs in the community college, and some of their occupational courses may not have been accepted in the transfer college. Furthermore, the entrants simply took fewer credits at the community college, and most of their early college coursework may have been general education courses readily transferable. Of the graduates in the Texas follow-up, 71 percent reported losing three credits or less; the study reported 65 percent losing three credits or less. The comparable figure for Maryland was 62 percent.

3.6 What was the grade point average of respondents at their transfer institution?

Three-fifths of the graduates reported earning a grade point average of 3.0 or higher at the transfer institution (Table 24). The grade point averages reported by the graduates and the 1974 entrants were quite similar. The argument that students should stay longer at the community college in order to get higher grades at the transfer school is not supported. In order to assess the validity of the self-reported grades, data from the University of Maryland College Park were checked. The proportion of students dismissed after the Fall term is typically 2 percent and 6 percent after the Spring term. While the University of Maryland has a sliding scale for dismissal, a 2.0 average is ultimately required. Although University of Maryland transfers are only about one-third of the total, the proportion of self-reported grades of less than 2.0 seems to be fairly accurate.

3.7 How satisfied were the respondents with their preparation for transfer?

Nine-tenths of the graduates reported that they were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with their preparation for transfer (Table 24). Graduates reported more satisfaction than the entrants. The Connecticut follow-up of graduates found that 95 percent of the respondents were extremely satisfied or satisfied with their transfer preparation; the comparable Maryland figure for graduates is 92 percent.

Table 24

SUCCESS OF RESPONDENTS IN TRANSFER INSTITUTIONS

	1972 Entrants		1974 Entrants		1978 Graduates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Credits Lost						
None	1,394	53	1,294	53	602	43
1 - 3	535	20	470	19	264	19
4 - 6	307	12	295	12	212	15
7 - 12	214	8	209	9	155	11
13 - 20	103	4	89	4	87	6
21 or more	80	3	82	3	8	6
Grade Point Average						
Below 2.0	72	3	68	3	30	2
2.0 - 2.4	377	14	290	11	157	12
2.5 - 2.9	815	30	718	28	341	26
3.0 - 3.4	947	35	904	35	458	35
Above 3.5	495	18	594	23	316	24
Satisfaction with Preparation						
Extremely satisfied	845	30	840	33	520	36
Satisfied	1,711	61	1,401	55	808	56
Unsatisfied	242	9	295	12	124	8

4.0 Overall Evaluation

4.1 How satisfied were graduates with the quality of classroom instruction in their community college program?

4.2 How satisfied were graduates with the overall quality of their community college?

Among graduates, satisfaction with the quality of instruction was quite high with 42 percent reporting that they were extremely satisfied and an additional 54 percent reporting that they were satisfied (Table 25). Among transfer areas, graduates in Arts and Science and in Teacher Education reported the highest rates of satisfaction (55 percent extremely satisfied in each area). The least satisfaction with the instruction in their program was reported by Humanities and Social

Science graduates (30 percent). Among occupational programs, the highest rates of satisfaction with instruction were reported by graduates in Medical Laboratory Technician (55 percent extremely satisfied), Recreation (53 percent), Early Childhood (49 percent), and Secretarial Science (48 percent). The occupational program with the least satisfaction was Fire Science (21 percent extremely satisfied). The question was not asked of the entrants. Satisfaction with the overall quality of the community college was also high with 43 percent of the graduates extremely satisfied and 54 percent satisfied.

Table 25

COMMUNITY COLLEGE EVALUATION

Variable	1978 Graduates Number	Percent
Quality of Instruction		
Extremely satisfied	1,545	42
Satisfied	1,999	54
Unsatisfied	121	3
Overall Quality		
Extremely satisfied	1,677	43
Satisfied	2,081	54
Unsatisfied	130	3

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The studies were a part of a continuing program of student follow-up in Maryland to provide information about the outcomes of community college education. Their primary purpose was to help Maryland community colleges evaluate the extent to which they assisted students in achieving their educational goals, their immediate career development, and their preparation for transfer to senior colleges and universities. The studies were also conducted to provide data for the Program Data Monitoring System and the Vocational Education Data System. Finally, the studies were done to compare community college outcomes among entrants and graduates. The research was a joint project of the State Board for Community Colleges and the Maryland Community College Research Group.

The results from two studies are given. Students (23,199) who entered in Fall 1974 were surveyed in 1978, and the response rate among those receiving the questionnaires was 43 percent. Graduates (7,175) of fiscal year 1978 were surveyed in 1979, and the response rate among those receiving the questionnaires was 63 percent. Specific research questions for both graduates and entrants were directed toward five areas: student educational goals, goal achievement, career development, transfer, and satisfaction.

Student educational goals. About one-third of both entrants and graduates held a transfer preparation goal. Graduates tended to be more interested in preparation for a new job (32 percent vs. 18 percent). Entrants were more concerned about self-enrichment and updating current job skills.

Goal achievement. About two-thirds of the entrants and 85 percent of the graduates reported that they achieved their community college educational goals. Men and minority students reported achieving educational goals at a significantly lower rate than women and white students; the differences were significant in both the entrant and the graduate studies. While only 22 percent of all 1974 entrants had received an AA degree within 3½ years, 43 percent of the entrants whose goal was an AA had earned the degree.

Career development. About three-fourths of both entrants and graduates were employed full-time when their goal was career development. There were no racial differences in employment goal achievement, but women experienced significantly less goal achievement in the entrant study; no differences by sex were found in the graduate study. Considering all respondents apart from their goals, about 55 percent of both entrants and graduates were employed full-time, and about 20 percent were employed part-time. Graduates reported a higher rate of employment in a job related to their community college program than entrants (80 percent vs. 72 percent). One-half of the full-time employees in both studies were employed in the same county as their community college and 85 percent were employed in Maryland.

Transfer. About three-fourths of both entrants and graduates transferred when their goal was to transfer. There were no differences in transfer goal achievement by sex. Among entrants, white students were more likely to achieve transfer goals, but among graduates no significant racial differences in transfer goal achievement were found. Considering all respondents apart from their goals, about 40 percent transferred to another college. Over three-fourths of both entrants and graduates transferred to a Maryland institution, but students in the entrant study were more likely to transfer out-of-state than graduates. Graduates were more likely than entrants to transfer into a program that was related to their community college program, and the graduates reported slightly more satisfaction with their preparation for transfer. However, the graduates tended to lose more credits in transferring than did the entrants. Entrants and graduates both earned the same grades at the transfer college.

Student satisfaction. Graduates were quite satisfied with the quality of instruction, with 42 percent extremely satisfied and 54 percent satisfied. They were also highly satisfied with the overall quality of their community college, with only three percent reporting dissatisfaction.

Implications

Perception of the community college. As pointed out in the follow-up of 1972 entrants (Tschechtelin, 1976) there is still a need for educators and policy-makers to see community colleges for what they actually do, and not simply as half of a four-year college. Maryland follow-up studies have shown that many students

come to college for reasons apart from a degree, including upgrading job skills and self-enrichment. It is inappropriate to speak of freshmen or college-age population in the community college. One manifestation of the distorted perception of the community college is the failure of federal student assistance programs to aid part-time students, who comprise two-thirds of the community college students. A continuous effort is needed to be sure that decision-makers see community colleges through clear lenses. The Community College Quiz (Appendix C) may be helpful in making the point.

Racial differences in student success. The follow-up report on the 1972 entrants called for research about the racial differences in student goal achievement. Why did black students achieve degree and transfer goals less often than whites? (There was no difference in employment goal achievement.) Additional research was conducted (Tschechtelin, 1979), and racial differences were not found to be unique to one study or to one community college. Colleges need to make assistance to black students a high priority through: (a) excellent developmental programs, (b) adequate student financial aid, (c) course scheduling for evening and weekends, and (d) an overall sensitivity to the needs of black students. There is evidence that such increased effort can have rewards; among entrants, blacks have a significantly lower transfer goal achievement rate, but among graduates the racial differences are not significant. The implication is that if the community college can help black students to persist to the AA degree, blacks and whites will do equally well in achieving transfer.

The transfer process. Entrants and graduates reported similar transfer goal achievement. However, while graduates were more likely to be in a program related to their community college studies, they lost more credits in the transfer process than did the entrants. Such a phenomenon could be caused by the fact that entrants simply carry fewer credits to the transfer college, and thus have a smaller probability of courses being disallowed. Another possibility is that some graduates are transferring with AA degrees in occupational fields, and having some occupational courses disallowed. Of course, the articulation agreements between community colleges and transfer institutions may be the problem. In any event, further research is needed to determine the reasons for the loss of credits among graduates, including an analysis of the community college curricula of the students with higher credit losses.

There seems to be a trend in the proportion of community college students transferring to four-year institutions. The percentage of respondents indicating that they did any transfer work has declined 39-38-35 percent in the 1971-1972-1974 entrant studies, respectively. Data from the University of Maryland at College Park have confirmed the follow-up evidence.

Accuracy of student program codes. About two percent of the graduates had invalid program codes, such as "undeclared program." This suggests a minor problem in the updating of student records. At some colleges, students declare a program when they first register and are never required to confirm the decision

until they are about to graduate. With such a process, many students change their program and take different courses, but college records do not reflect the fact. Improvements in college record systems would help colleges have a more accurate picture of the real curricula of their students.

Differences among entrants and graduates. Since only a minority of community college students graduate, it has seemed appropriate to conduct follow-up research on entrants as well as graduates. How do the basic outcomes of community college differ between entrant and graduation populations? Table 26 summarizes the differences in the areas of goals, employment, and transfer. In terms of goals, the two studies found considerable differences, with graduates more interested in immediate career preparation and less interested in self-enrichment. Graduates also reported higher educational goal achievement.

In terms of employment, results from the entrant and graduate studies were quite similar. Employment goal achievement, employment, and job location were all comparable. Only the relationship of program to job was slightly higher for the graduates.

The comparison of results from the entrant and graduate studies produces considerable differences in the transfer area. Apart from their goal, more of the graduates tend to transfer, and to a college in Maryland. Graduates say that their transfer programs are more related to their community college program, but somehow they lose more credits in the transfer process. Entrants and graduates do achieve transfer goals equally well, though, and receive similar grades at their transfer college. On balance, it would appear that it is important to conduct entrant as well as graduate follow-up of community college students. The combination of the two populations is necessary to see a clear picture of the results of community college education, especially regarding goals and transfer.

Table 26

DIFFERENCES IN GOALS AND OUTCOMES
AMONG ENTRANTS AND GRADUATES

	1974 Entrants	1978 Graduates
Goal Items		
Goals	More update skills and self-enrichment	More career preparation
Goal achievement	63%	85%
Employment Items		
Employment goal achievement	79%	75%
Full-time employment	57	56
Job related to program	75	80
Job located in Maryland	86	85
Transfer Items		
Transfer goal achievement	76%	74%
Transferred	35	40
Transferred to a Maryland college	73	84
Transfer programs related to community college program	84	91
Lost no credits in transfer	53	43
Transfer grades 3.0 and above	58	59

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PARTICIPATING COLLEGES

Allegany Community College
Anne Arundel Community College
Community College of Baltimore
Catonsville Community College
Cecil Community College
Charles County Community College
Chesapeake College
Dundalk Community College
Essex Community College
Frederick Community College
Garrett Community College
Hagerstown Junior College
Harford Community College
Howard Community College
Montgomery Community College
Prince George's Community College

MARYLAND PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES
STUDENT FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE
FIRST-TIME STUDENTS, FALL 1974

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help your community college and the State Board for Community Colleges assess and improve their programs. Please complete it promptly (even if you took only one or two courses) and return in the envelope provided. All answers will be strictly confidential. Thank you for your assistance.

A. Please check what you hoped to achieve at this community college.

37
- ☐ 1. Take courses without working toward a degree or certificate
- ☐ 2. Certificate
- ☐ 3. Associate degree

B. Please check the one statement which most closely corresponds to your primary reason for attending this college.

38
- ☐ 1. Exploration of new career or academic areas
- ☐ 2. Preparation for immediate entry into a career
- ☐ 3. Preparation for transfer to a four-year institution
- ☐ 4. Update skills for a job currently held
- ☐ 5. Interest and self-enrichment
- ☐ 6. Other (specify) _____

C. Was your goal (indicated in Item B) achieved by the time you left this community college?

39
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Still attending this community college

D. Did you attend this community college primarily on a part-time or full-time basis?

40
- ☐ 1. Part-time (11 credits or less per term)
- ☐ 2. Full-time (12 credits or more per term)

E. Would you recommend your program of study at this community college to a friend? (Check one)

31
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Uncertain

F. Would you recommend this college to a friend? (Check one)

42
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Uncertain

G. Please respond to this item if you are no longer a student at this college.
Listed below are some academic, employment, financial, and personal reasons why a student might leave college. To what extent were these your reasons for leaving this college? (Check as many as apply.)

43 ☐ a. Achieved educational goal
44 ☐ b. Changed educational goal
45 ☐ c. Scheduling conflict between job and studies
46 ☐ d. Accepted a job
47 ☐ e. Went into military service
48 ☐ f. Program or courses not available at this college
49 ☐ g. Dissatisfaction with program
50 ☐ h. Unsure about my choice of major
51 ☐ i. Course work not challenging
52 ☐ j. Low grades
53 ☐ k. Found courses too difficult
54 ☐ l. Dissatisfied with quality of teaching
55 ☐ m. Transferred
56 ☐ n. Applied, but could not obtain financial aid
57 ☐ o. Financial aid was not sufficient
58 ☐ p. Child care too costly
59 ☐ q. This college was too expensive
60 ☐ r. Personal/marriage

H. If you are no longer a student at this college, look at the above list and select the three most important reasons why you did not return to this college. (List, in order of importance, the appropriate letter [a, b, c, etc.] in the boxes below.)

61 First ☐
62 Second ☐
63 Third ☐

OVER

EMPLOYMENT

Check one answer for each question.

I. Your current employment status.

- ☐ 1. Employed part-time
- 64 ☐ 2. Employed full-time
- ☐ 3. Unemployed and seeking a job
- ☐ 4. Unemployed and not seeking a job

If you are currently unemployed, skip to item N.

J. Did you hold this same job while attending the community college?

- 65 ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No

K. Geographic location in which you are presently employed.

- ☐ 1. Same county/city as this community college
- ☐ 2. Other county in Maryland
- ☐ 3. Baltimore City
- ☐ 4. Washington, D.C.
- 66 ☐ 5. Delaware
- ☐ 6. Pennsylvania
- ☐ 7. Virginia
- ☐ 8. West Virginia
- ☐ 9. Other state

L. Relationship between your program at this community college and your job.

- ☐ 1. Program directly related to job
- 67 ☐ 2. Program somewhat related to job
- ☐ 3. Program not at all related to job

M. Did your educational program at this community college assist you in:
Increasing your theoretical understanding required for your job?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- 68 ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Not applicable

Increasing your abilities to perform skills required by your job?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- 69 ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Not applicable

Obtaining your job?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- 70 ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Not applicable

Obtaining salary increases and/or promotions?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- 71 ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Not applicable

TRANSFER

If you enrolled at *another* college since leaving this college, please respond to the following questions, even if you are no longer a student.
Check one answer for each question.

N. Indicate the type of institution to which you transferred.

- ☐ 1. Another Maryland public community college
- ☐ 2. A public State college in Maryland
- ☐ 3. The University of Maryland
- ☐ 4. Maryland private four-year college or university
- 72 ☐ 5. A private two-year Maryland college
- ☐ 6. Maryland technical or commercial school
- ☐ 7. Out-of-state four-year public college or university
- ☐ 8. Out-of-state four-year private college or university
- ☐ 9. Other out-of-state college or university

O. What was your enrollment status when you enrolled in the institution indicated above.

- ☐ 1. Part-time
- 73 ☐ 2. Full-time

P. Indicate your overall grade point average at the transfer institution (based on a 4-point scale).

- ☐ 1. Less than 2.0
- ☐ 2. 2.0 - 2.4
- 74 ☐ 3. 2.5 - 2.9
- ☐ 4. 3.0 - 3.4
- ☐ 5. 3.5 and over

Q. To what extent was your curriculum program at this community college related to your major at the transfer institution?

- ☐ 1. Directly related
- 75 ☐ 2. Somewhat related
- ☐ 3. Not related

R. How satisfied were you with your preparation for transfer?

- ☐ 1. Extremely satisfied
- 76 ☐ 2. Satisfied
- ☐ 3. Unsatisfied

S. How many credit hours earned at this community college were not accepted at the transfer institution?

- ☐ 1. All credit hours accepted
- ☐ 2. Lost 1-3 credit hours
- 77 ☐ 3. Lost 4-6 credit hours
- ☐ 4. Lost 7-12 credit hours
- ☐ 5. Lost 13-20 credit hours
- ☐ 6. Lost more than 21 credit hours

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

MARYLAND PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

№ 02756

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help your community college and the State Board for Community Colleges assess and improve their programs. Please complete it promptly and return it in the envelope provided. This form should require less than 10 minutes to complete. All answers will be strictly confidential. Thank you for your assistance.

(Please make corrections if necessary.)

_____
(Name)

_____
(Address)

_____

ALL GRADUATES SHOULD COMPLETE PART I.

PART I.

A. Check the items that describe your current status. (check as many as apply)

37 [ ] In school
38 [ ] Employed
39 [ ] Not employed
40 [ ] Full-time home responsibility
41 [ ] In active military services
42 [ ] Other (specify) _____

B. Check the one statement which most closely corresponds to your primary reason for attending this community college. (check one)

[ ] 1. Exploration of new career or academic areas
[ ] 2. Preparation for immediate entry into a career
[ ] 3. Preparation for transfer to a four-year institution
43 [ ] 4. Update skills for a job currently held
[ ] 5. Interest and self-enrichment
[ ] 6. Other (specify) _____

C. Was your goal (indicated in Item B) achieved by the time you graduated from this community college? (check one)

44 [ ] 1. Yes
[ ] 2. No

D. How satisfied were you with the quality of classroom instruction in your program of study? (check one)

45 [ ] 1. Extremely satisfied
[ ] 2. Satisfied
[ ] 3. Unsatisfied

E. How satisfied were you with the overall quality of this community college? (check one)

46 [ ] 1. Extremely satisfied
[ ] 2. Satisfied
[ ] 3. Unsatisfied

F. What was the **most important** reason you chose this communtiy college? (check one)

47
- [ ] 1. Low cost
- [ ] 2. Convenient location
- [ ] 3. Program I wanted was offered
- [ ] 4. Financial aid was available
- [ ] 5. Unwilling or unable to attend another college
- [ ] 6. College's good academic reputation
- [ ] 7. Advice of friends
- [ ] 8. Advice of high school counselor

IF YOU ARE IN SCHOOL, COMPLETE PART 2; OTHERWISE, GO TO PART 3.

PART 2.

G. What type of school are you currently attending? (check one)

48
- [ ] 1. Another Maryland public community college
- [ ] 2. A public State college in Maryland
- [ ] 3. The University of Maryland
- [ ] 4. Maryland private four-year college or university
- [ ] 5. A private two-year Maryland college
- [ ] 6. Maryland technical or commercial school
- [ ] 7. Out-of-state four-year public college or university
- [ ] 8. Out-of-state four-year private college or university
- [ ] 9. Other out-of-state college or university

Enter name of school here:

_____

_____

H. What is your enrollment status in the school indicated above?

49
- [ ] 1. Part-time
- [ ] 2. Full-time

I. Indicate your overall grade point average for credits earned at the transfer school (based on a 4-point scale).

50
- [ ] 1. Less than 2.0
- [ ] 2. 2.0-2.4
- [ ] 3. 2.5-2.9
- [ ] 4. 3.0-3.4
- [ ] 5. 3.5 and over
- [ ] 6. Have not yet completed a full semester

J. To what extent was your curriculum program at this community college related to your major at the transfer school?

51
- [ ] 1. Directly related
- [ ] 2. Somewhat related
- [ ] 3. Not related

K. How satisfied were you with your preparation for transfer?

52
- [ ] 1. Extremely satisfied
- [ ] 2. Satisfied
- [ ] 3. Unsatisfied

L. How many credit hours earned at this community college were not accepted at the transfer school?

53
- [ ] 1. All credit hours accepted
- [ ] 2. Lost 1-3 credit hours
- [ ] 3. Lost 4-6 credit hours
- [ ] 4. Lost 7-12 credit hours
- [ ] 5. Lost 13-20 credit hours
- [ ] 6. Lost more than 21 credit hours

IF YOU ARE EMPLOYED, COMPLETE PART 3; OTHERWISE, GO TO PART 4.

PART 3.

M. Your current employment status.

54
[ ] 1. Employed part-time
[ ] 2. Employed full-time

N. What is the title of your current position?

_____

Employer's name and address:

55-57 S O C

_____

_____

_____

O. Will you give the college permission to contact your employer for the purpose of evaluating your community college program?

[ ] 1. Yes
[ ] 2. No

58

Supervisor's name: _____

Supervisor's title: _____

P. When did you begin your present job? (check one)

59
[ ] 1. Before attending this community college
[ ] 2. While attending this community college
[ ] 3. After graduating from this community college

Q. Geographic location in which you are presently employed. (check one)

[ ] 1. Same county/city as this community college
[ ] 2. Other county in Maryland
[ ] 3. Baltimore City
[ ] 4. Washington, D.C.
60
[ ] 5. Delaware
[ ] 6. Pennsylvania
[ ] 7. Virginia
[ ] 8. West Virginia
[ ] 9. Other state

R. Relationship between your program at this community college and your job. (check one)

61
[ ] 1. Program directly related to job
[ ] 2. Program somewhat related to job
[ ] 3. Program not at all related to job

S. If your job is **not** related to your program of study, check the major reason below. (check one)

[ ] 1. Could not find job in field of preparation
[ ] 2. Better pay in field in which employed
62
[ ] 3. Better opportunity for advancement in field in which employed
[ ] 4. Did not want to work in the field of preparation
[ ] 5. Program of study at this college was not career-oriented
[ ] 6. Other (please explain) _____

T. If you are employed full-time, what is your current weekly salary without overtime and **before** deductions? (check one)

63
- [ ] 1. $0-$145
- [ ] 2. $146-$175
- [ ] 3. $176-$205
- [ ] 4. $206-$235
- [ ] 5. $236-$265
- [ ] 6. $266-$295
- [ ] 7. $296-$325
- [ ] 8. $326 and above

64-67 U. If you are employed part-time, what is your hourly salary? $_____._____

68-69 On the average, how many hours per week do you work? _____ hours

V. Who helped you locate your current job? (check as many as appropriate)

70 [ ] Faculty member
71 [ ] College Placement Office
72 [ ] Newspaper
73 [ ] Employment agency
74 [ ] Contacted employer on my own
75 [ ] Family or friend
76 [ ] Other

W. How satisfied are you with your community college preparation for employment? (check one)

77
- [ ] 1. Extremely satisfied
- [ ] 2. Satisfied
- [ ] 3. Unsatisfied

IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED, COMPLETE PART 4.

PART 4.

X. Please check one.

78
- [ ] 1. I am seeking a job
- [ ] 2. I am not seeking a job

Y. If you are seeking a job, please check the **major** reason you have been unable to secure employment. (check one)

79
- [ ] 1. Salary too low in the field for which I was prepared at the community college
- [ ] 2. There are few openings in the field for which I was prepared
- [ ] 3. I need more education to qualify for the job I want
- [ ] 4. I have changed my career objective since graduating
- [ ] 5. I have not looked hard enough

What changes could be made to your community college program to improve a graduate's employment and/or transfer performance?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed prepaid envelope.

Appendix C

COMMUNITY COLLEGE QUIZ

Maryland State Board for Community Colleges

Test your knowledge about community college students. The answers have been established through extensive student follow-up studies in Maryland and are given at the bottom of page two. Circle the correct answer to each item.

1. What percentage of community college students come to the college for courses only (and not to seek a degree)?

   a. 5 percent.
   b. 20 percent.
   c. 35 percent.
   d. 50 percent.

2. Among the graduates, the two main reasons for attending a community college are (circle two)

   a. low cost.
   b. convenient location.
   c. program that the student wanted was available.
   d. college's academic reputation.
   e. unwilling or unable to attend another college.

3. What percentage of students are employed full-time <u>while</u> attending the community college?

   a. 10 percent.
   b. 30 percent.
   c. 50 percent.
   d. 70 percent.

4. About how many students graduate within 3½ years after entry?

   a. 10 percent.
   b. 20 percent.
   c. 40 percent.
   d. 60 percent.

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5. After students leave the community college,

   a. most students transfer to a four-year college.
   b. most students are employed.
   c. about equal numbers transfer as are employed.

6. The student most likely to graduate is one who receives

   a. A grades.
   b. B grades.
   c. C grades.

7. The average community college student completes about how many credit hours of instruction in 3½ years?

   a. 15.
   b. 30.
   c. 45.
   d. 60.

8. Black and white students achieve what goal(s) at about the same rate?

   a. Transfer and employment goals.
   b. Employment goals.
   c. Transfer goals.
   d. Degree goals.
   e. None of the above.

9. Graduates who were seeking employment were asked why they could not get a job. What reason was selected least often?

   a. Few openings in the field of preparation.
   b. Needed more education to qualify for the job wanted.
   c. Salary too low in the field of preparation.
   d. Did not look hard enough for a job.
   e. Changed career objectives since graduating.

10. What percentage of the graduates that transferred had completed occupational programs at their community college?

   a. 5 percent.
   b. 20 percent.
   c. 40 percent.
   d. 60 percent.

Jim Tschechtelin 10-10-79

Answers: (1) c., (2) b. and c., (3) c., (4) b., (5) b., (6) b., (7) b., (8) b., (9) c., (10) c.